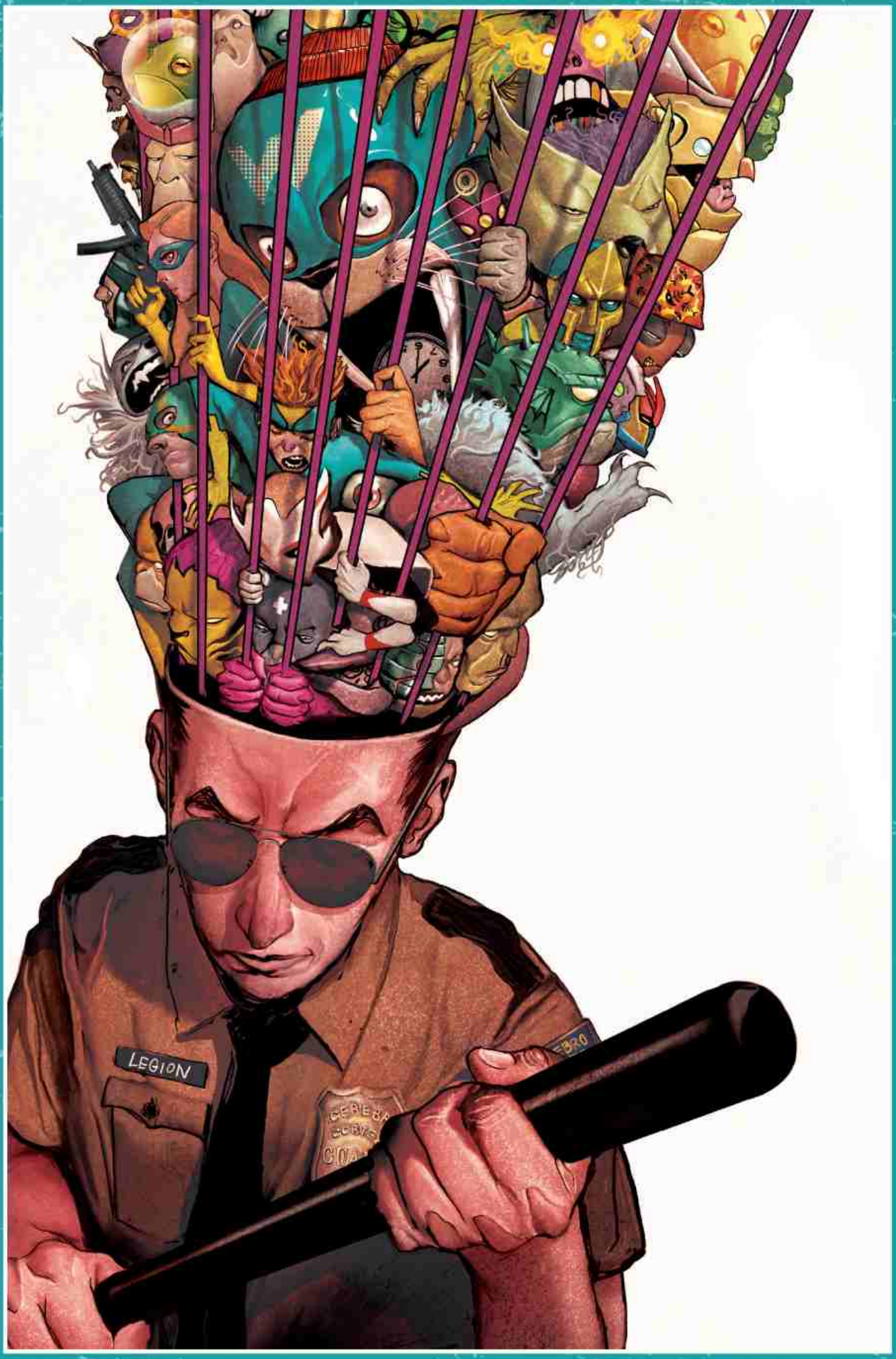
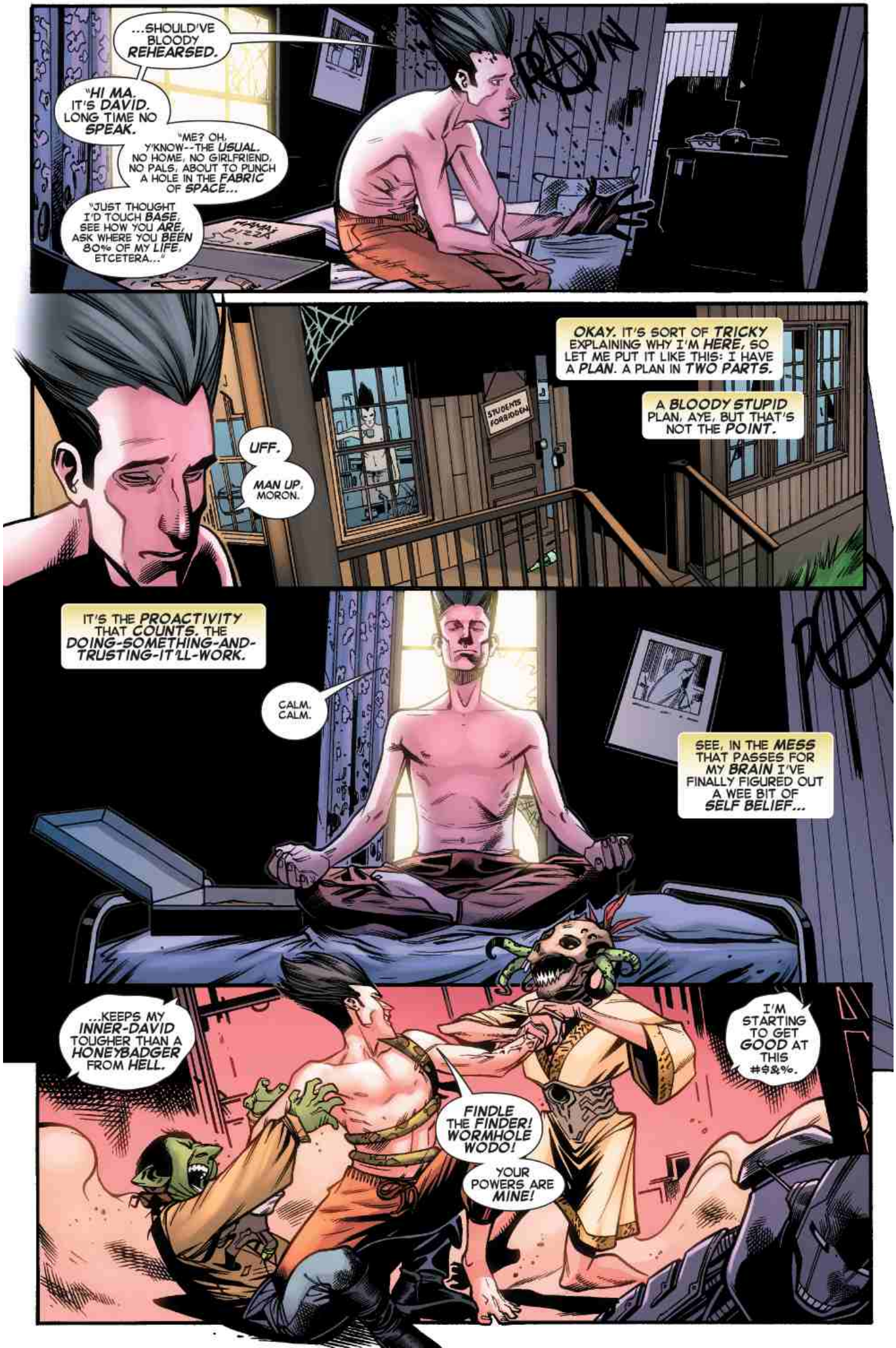


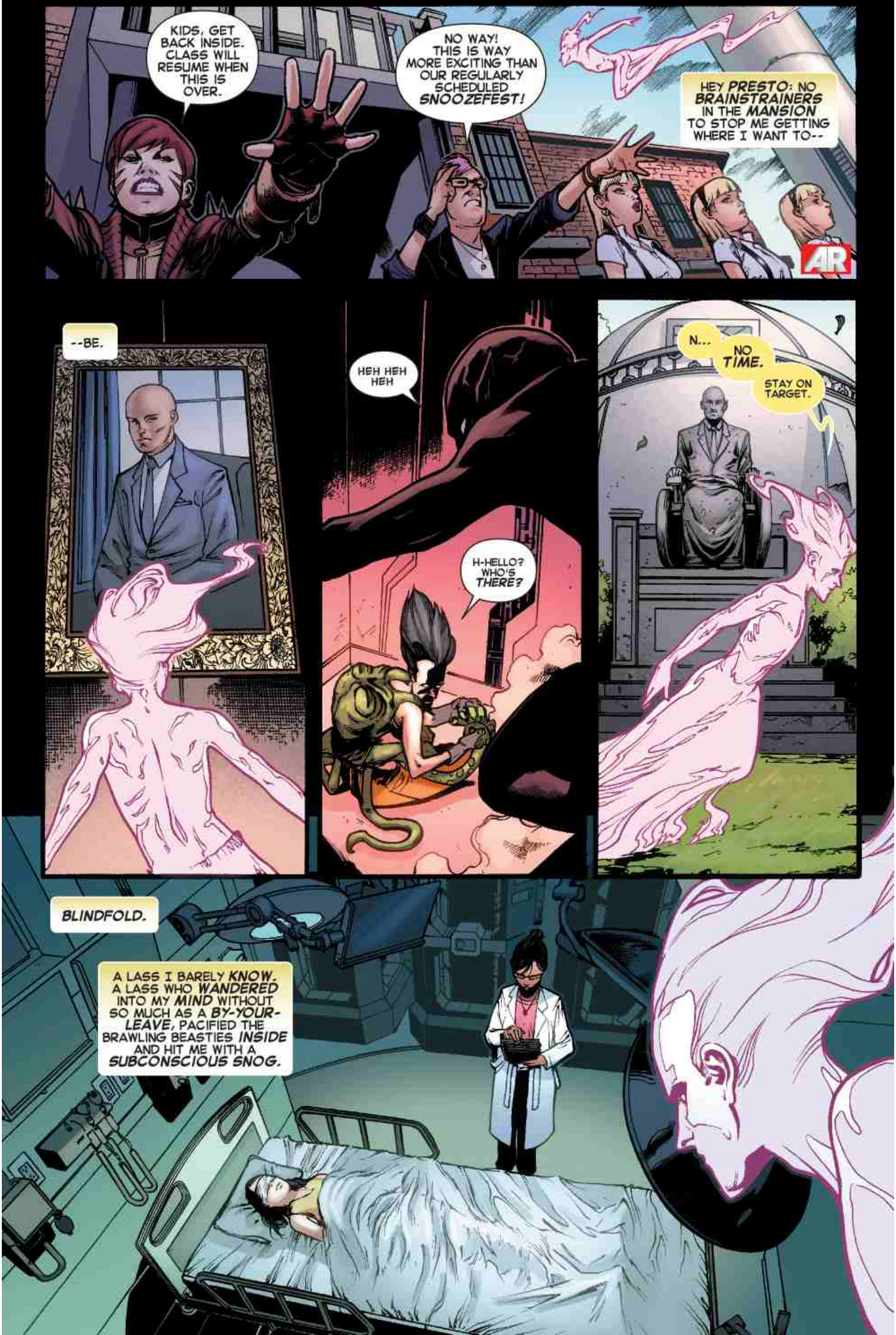
FIVE

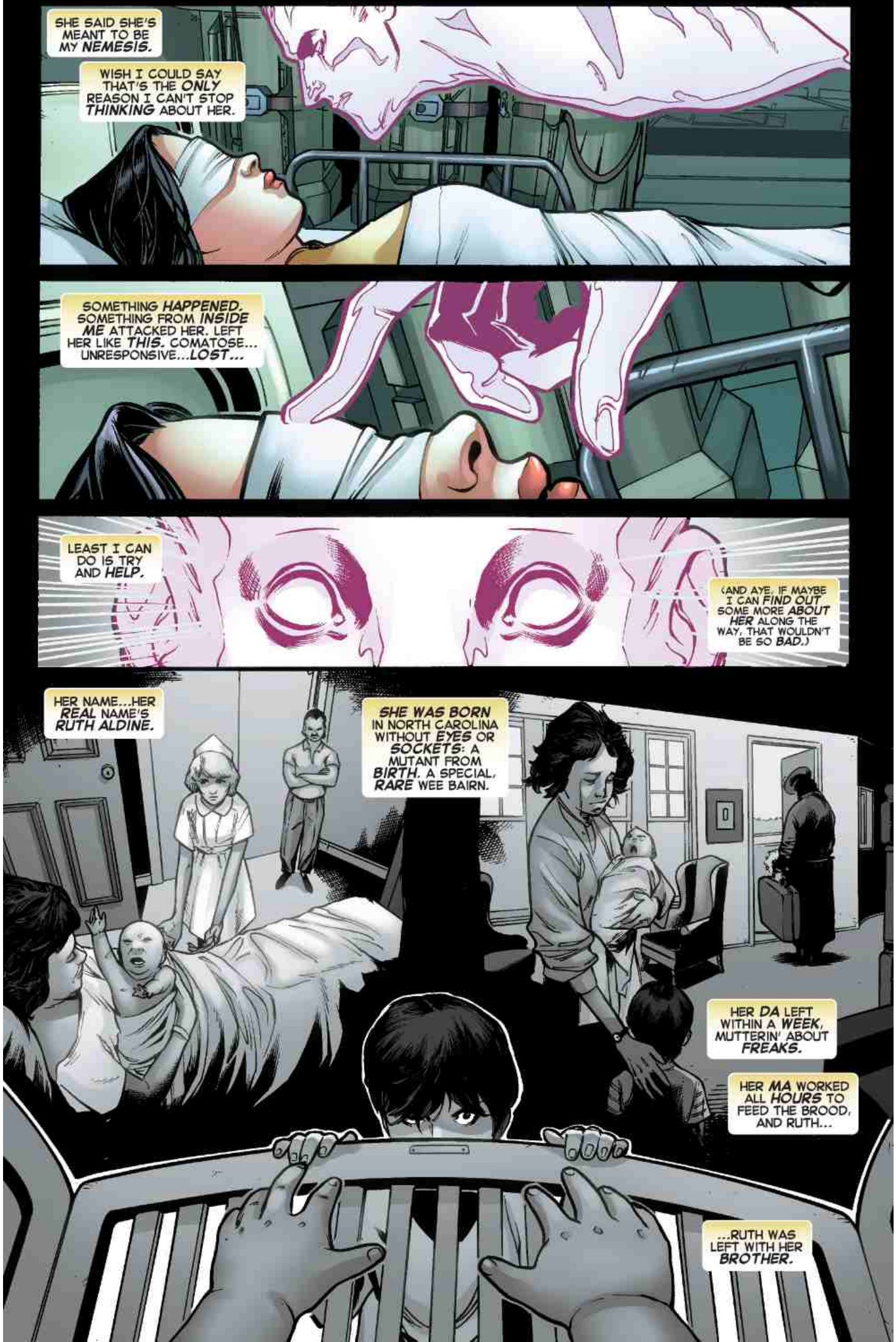
EMBASSY OF ISRAEL IN LONDON. UNITED KINGDOM.
RRRIIIINNGG RRRIIIINNGG KLNK
AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE. WHO'S THIS?
...
HELLO?
=SIGH=
I CAN HEAR YOU BREATHING, PAL...
...I...
AMBASSADOR GABRIELLE HALLER
H-HANG UP.
HANG UP HANG UP HANG UP NOW.
THE CORTEX COMPLEX. CONCEPTUAL PRISON. INSIDE LEGION'S HEAD.
LOOK, IT'S THE THIRD TIME THIS WEEK. WHO IS THIS? HOW DID YOU EVEN GET THIS NUM--?
CLNK
SKEEVY GARDEN SHED. WESTCHESTER, NEW YORK.
I AM SUCH A &@%@!# COWARD.
OLECCCCC—

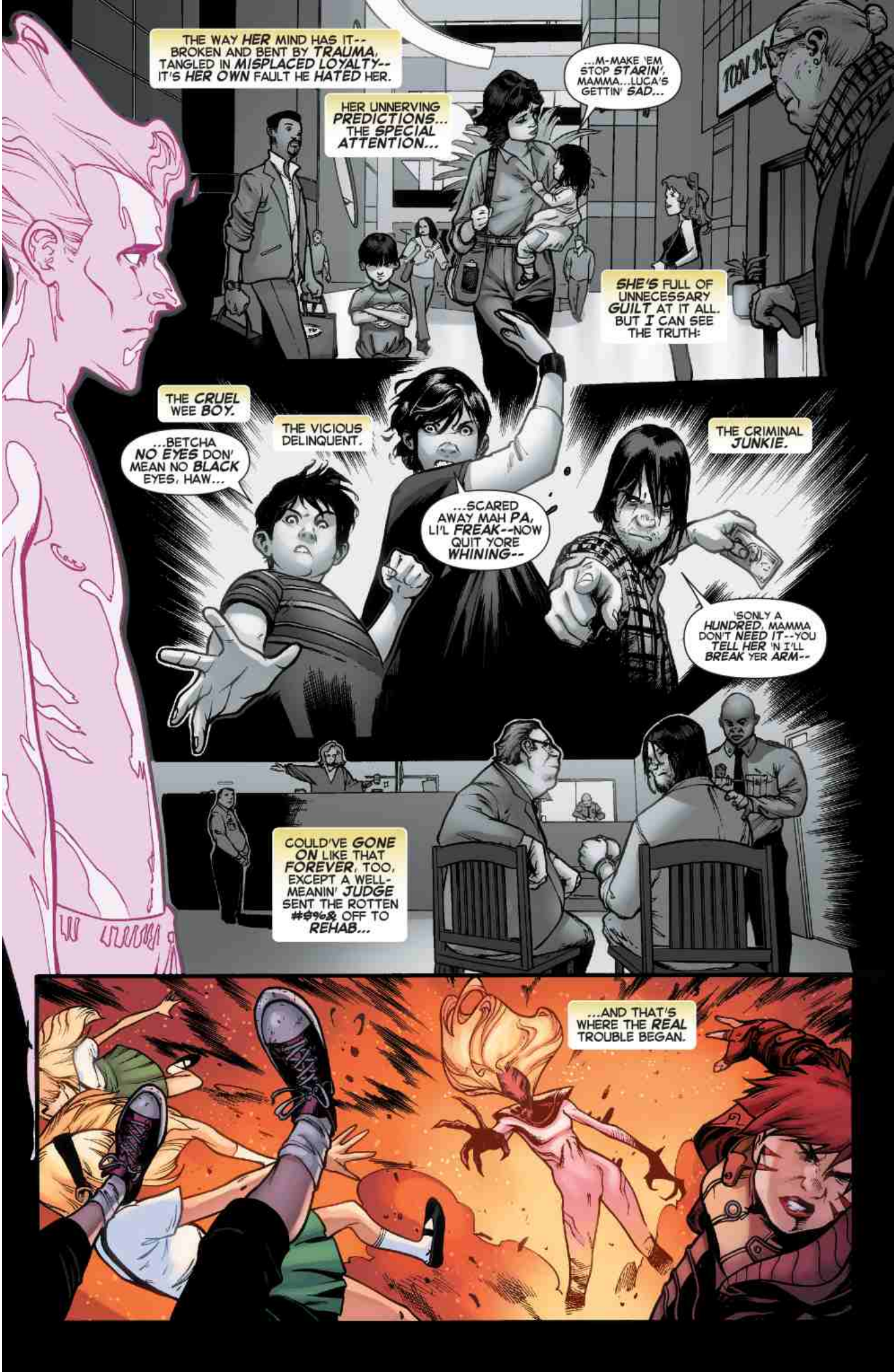

...SHOULD'VE BLOODY REHEARSED.
"HI MA. IT'S DAVID. LONG TIME NO SPEAK.
"ME? OH, Y'KNOW--THE USUAL. NO HOME, NO GIRLFRIEND, NO PALS, ABOUT TO PUNCH A HOLE IN THE FABRIC OF SPACE...
"JUST THOUGHT I'D TOUCH BASE, SEE HOW YOU ARE, ASK WHERE YOU BEEN 80% OF MY LIFE, ETCETERA..."
OKAY. IT'S SORT OF TRICKY EXPLAINING WHY I'M HERE, SO LET ME PUT IT LIKE THIS: I HAVE A PLAN. A PLAN IN TWO PARTS.
A BLOODY STUPID PLAN, AYE, BUT THAT'S NOT THE POINT.
STUDENTS FORBIDDEN
UFF.
MAN UP, MORON.
IT'S THE PROACTIVITY THAT COUNTS. THE DOING-SOMETHING-AND-TRUSTING-IT'LL-WORK.
CALM. CALM.
SEE, IN THE MESS THAT PASSES FOR MY BRAIN I'VE FINALLY FIGURED OUT A WEE BIT OF SELF BELIEF...
...KEEPS MY INNER-DAVID TOUGHER THAN A HONEYBADGER FROM HELL.
FINDLE THE FINDER! WORMHOLE WODO!
YOUR POWERS ARE MINE!
I'M STARTING TO GET GOOD AT THIS #$&%.

FOR INSTANCE: RIGHT NOW I'M LOCATING A BUNCH OF DISGUSTING ALIEN MONSTERS SEVERAL THOUSAND LIGHT-YEARS AWAY, AND TELEPORTING 'EM FIFTY YARDS NORTH OF HERE.
WHICH IS BASICALLY IMPOSSIBLE, TO ANYONE WITHOUT 200 OMEGA-LEVEL SPLIT PERSONALITIES IN THEIR BRAIN. YAY ME.
IT'S ALSO, I CONCEDE, A SOMEWHAT INCONSIDERATE THING TO DO TO THE FOLKS WHO LIVE NEAR HERE.
STILL: IT'S ONLY PART ONE OF THE PLAN. WE'LL COME BACK TO IT IN A MINUTE, WHEN THE COSMIC WORMHOLES'VE DONE THEIR JOB.
PART TWO'S THE IMPORTANT BIT ANYWAY.
PART TWO'S ALL ABOUT MY DELIGHTFUL, TENTACLED BACKPACK BUDDY...
ONE DAY I'LL EAT YOUR LUNGS, YOU BIG-HAIRED BAAAAAAA
...TYRANNIX THE ABOMINOID.
THANKS TO HIM, MINE'S THE POWER OF TELEPATHY. I'LL BE NEEDING THAT.
SEE, PART TWO OF THE PLAN'S ALL ABOUT EXPLORING FORBIDDEN AREAS-- GETTIN' ANSWERS TO SOME BURNING QUESTIONS--
--AND FOR THAT I NEEDED A FLASHY LIGHTSHOW TO CLEAR THE PATH.

HENCE PART ONE.
THE JEAN GREY SCHOOL FOR HIGHER LEARNING. ALSO IN WESTCHESTER, NEW YORK.
SPANDEX TYPES ARE SUCKERS FOR A BIG, DUMB DIVERSION.
UH
ON DETENTION
DIRE WRAITHS!
DIRE WRAITHS ON THE FRONT LAWN!
GET THE STUDENTS TO SAFETY! FULL LOCKDOWN!
THEY'VE GOT A FEMALE WITH THEM! WE NEED THE PSI-TEAMS OUT HERE!
#$%& THAT! WE NEED EVERYONE OUT HERE!


KIDS, GET BACK INSIDE. CLASS WILL RESUME WHEN THIS IS OVER.
NO WAY! THIS IS WAY MORE EXCITING THAN OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED SNOOZEFEST!
HEY PRESTO: NO BRAINSTRAINERS IN THE MANSION TO STOP ME GETTING WHERE I WANT TO--
AR
--BE.
HEH HEH HEH
H-HELLO? WHO'S THERE?
N... NO TIME.
STAY ON TARGET.
BLINDFOLD.
A LASS I BARELY KNOW. A LASS WHO WANDERED INTO MY MIND WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A BY-YOUR-LEAVE, PACIFIED THE BRAWLING BEASTIES INSIDE AND HIT ME WITH A SUBCONSCIOUS SNOG.


SHE SAID SHE'S MEANT TO BE MY NEMESIS.
WISH I COULD SAY THAT'S THE ONLY REASON I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT HER.
SOMETHING HAPPENED. SOMETHING FROM INSIDE ME ATTACKED HER. LEFT HER LIKE THIS. COMATOSE... UNRESPONSIVE...LOST...
LEAST I CAN DO IS TRY AND HELP.
(AND AYE, IF MAYBE I CAN FIND OUT SOME MORE ABOUT HER ALONG THE WAY, THAT WOULDN'T BE SO BAD.)
HER NAME...HER REAL NAME'S RUTH ALDINE.
SHE WAS BORN IN NORTH CAROLINA WITHOUT EYES OR SOCKETS: A MUTANT FROM BIRTH. A SPECIAL, RARE WEE BAIRN.
HER DA LEFT WITHIN A WEEK, MUTTERIN' ABOUT FREAKS.
HER MA WORKED ALL HOURS TO FEED THE BROOD, AND RUTH...
...RUTH WAS LEFT WITH HER BROTHER.


THE WAY HER MIND HAS IT-- BROKEN AND BENT BY TRAUMA, TANGLED IN MISPLACED LOYALTY-- IT'S HER OWN FAULT HE HATED HER.
HER UNNERVING PREDICTIONS... THE SPECIAL ATTENTION...
...M-MAKE 'EM STOP STARIN', MAMMA...LUCA'S GETTIN' SAD...
SHE'S FULL OF UNNECESSARY GUILT AT IT ALL. BUT I CAN SEE THE TRUTH:
THE CRUEL WEE BOY.
THE VICIOUS DELINQUENT.
THE CRIMINAL JUNKIE.
...BETCHA NO EYES DON' MEAN NO BLACK EYES, HAW...
...SCARED AWAY MAH PA, LI'L FREAK--NOW QUIT YORE WHINING--
'SONLY A HUNDRED, MAMMA DON'T NEED IT--YOU TELL HER 'N I'LL BREAK YER ARM--
COULD'VE GONE ON LIKE THAT FOREVER, TOO, EXCEPT A WELL-MEANIN' JUDGE SENT THE ROTTEN #$%&, OFF TO REHAB...
...AND THAT'S WHERE THE REAL TROUBLE BEGAN.

SEE, THE CORRECTIONAL PROGRAM WAS RUN BY A LOCAL CHURCH...
IT'S NOT ABOUT SICKNESS OR ADDICTION... IT'S ABOUT SUCCUMBIN' TO THE EVILS CORRUPTIN' GOD'S PURE CREATION.
DIGNIFIED... CONSERVATIVE... RESPECTED...
...BIGOTED.
PROMISCUITY. MIND-ALTERIN' CHEMICALS. HOMOSEXUALITY. AN' THE DEVILS WHO WALK AMONG US:
MUTANTS.
DIFFICULT TO SAY THEY POISONED HIS MIND--IT WAS ALREADY BLOODY TOXIC-- BUT THEY SURELY DID GIVE IT A FOCUS.
#$%&'RE YOU LOOKIN' AT, GENEQUEER?
THE PRIESTS NEVER CONDONED THE VIOLENCE, OF COURSE-- TOO UPRIGHT FOR THAT...
...BUT YOU CAN BET THEY WERE THERE ON THE SIDELINES...
...EGGING IT ON.
HIT IT!
HIT IT!
AR

ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE BASTARD FELL OFF THE WAGON. GOT HIMSELF PROPER CRAZY...
...#@%& MUTANTS...
...#@%@@& RUININ' EVERYTHIN'...
NOT THAT RUTH UNDERSTOOD THE WHY, BACK THEN.
ONLY THAT HER MA HAD MORE BRUISES THAN EVER.
ONLY THAT THE COPS PAID MORE VISITS.
ONLY THAT HER BROTHER WATCHED HER CLOSER THAN EVER...

'TIL THE DAY LUCA WENT AS QUIET AS SIN, AND SLIPPED OUT TO THE WOODSHED, AND...AND...

A BOM IN ATION.
WWWWWB
THEIR MAMMY MUST'VE BEEN ASLEEP UPSTAIRS. MUST'VE COME RUSHING DOWN TO SEE WHAT WAS CAUSING THE COMMOTION.
SURPRISED HIM AT JUST THE WRONG TIME.
L-LUCA? WHAT'RE Y...
GET AWAY FROM HER! GET AWAY FROM H--
THE WAY RUTH REMEMBERS IT, THE WHOLE THING'S A NUTSHELL-VERSION OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MUTANT:
THE STORY OF COLLATERAL DAMAGE.
NOT ME, YOU IDIAAAAAAAA
AR

LEAVE HER ALONE LEAVE HER ALONE LEAVE HER A--
WOMAN, YOU QUIT--
YORE DAMN
INTERFERIN'.
...
...
AW
L-LOOK. LOOK RUTH...
LOOK WHAT YOU MADE ME DO.

ISN'T SAYING MUCH, BUT THOSE WERE THE HAPPIEST YEARS OF RUTH'S LIFE.
SHE WENT TO HER AUNT IN PROSPECT PLAINS. GOT ON WITH LEARNIN' HER GIFTS. SORTING THROUGH FUTURES... SEEING BEYOND THE WORLD...
MOVING MATTER... READING MINDS.
...DON'T BE SAD, AUNTIE. I MISS MAMMA TOO...
AND WHERE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY...
LUCA RAN. THEY CAUGHT HIM. TRIAL TOOK EXACTLY HALF AN HOUR...
...AND THE VICIOUS SOD SAT ON DEATH ROW FOR SIX YEARS.
THERE'S A BLUR AFTER THAT. ONLY TO BE EXPECTED.
TURNS OUT A NEIGHBOR HEARD THE SCREAMS. DIALLED 911.
...CHANGING THEM.
I'M HERE TO WITNESS THE EXECUTION. M-MY PAPERWORK'S ALL IN ORDER.
YOU'RE HERE TO WITNESS THE EXECUTION. YOUR PAPERWORK'S ALL IN ORDER.
EVEN HERE--EVEN IN HER OWN BRAIN--IT'S HARD TO SAY WHY SHE FELT THE NEED TO BE THERE.
SOMETHING TO DO WITH FAMILY. SOMETHING THAT TRANSCENDED ALL THE AWFULNESS THE BASTARD HAD PUT HER THROUGH.
DOWN!
RRRR
SOMETHING TO DO WITH SOLIDARITY.
AR

IT'S QUITE A THING TO WATCH A PERSON DIE.
IT'S QUITE ANOTHER TO FIND THEM WATCHING YOU BACK.
L... LUCA...?
AAAAIIIEEEE

OH, MAYBE THERE WAS SOMETHIN' SPECIAL ABOUT HIM FROM THE START...
...OR MAYBE ALL THAT BIBLE TALK BEEFED UP HIS GHOST...
...OR MAYBE THERE WAS JUST SO MUCH HATE IN HIS #$%&#@ MIND IT OUTLASTED ITS OWN BRAIN.
WHATEVER IT WAS, HE TORE APART HIS SISTER'S PSYCHE.
RIPPED OUT HALF THE POWERS SHE'D LEARNT AND STOLE THEM AWAY.
LEFT HER INCOMPLETE.
SORRY.
THANK YOU, YES. PARDON?
NO, SORRY.
BROKEN.
NOT ALL-THERE.

THINGS BECOME FRACTURED AFTER THAT.
LIKE HER MIND WON'T GEL TOGETHER. LIKE THE PAIN REPELS THE SHARDS OF WHAT'S LEFT.
...SUGGEST A CLOSED CASKET... I'M NOT S'POSEDTA TELL YOU THIS BUT THE MORTICIAN CLAIMS THE BODY'S EYES ARE MISSING, SO...
...SAY IT'S A SCHOOL FOR... FOR PEOPLE LIKE YOU...H-HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT MOVING TO...
$1500
$2300
...THINK YOU SHOULD COME ALONG...PERHAPS YOU CAN HELP US FIND WHAT CAUSED THE PSYCHIC EPISODE, AND...
GET.
OUT.
HERE'S WHERE SHE'S HIDING--I'M SURE OF IT. IN THE GAPS OF HER OWN SELF.
A-AND IF I CAN JUST REACH HER...
RUTH?
RUTH, ARE YOU THERE? IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP RUTH, I NEED Y--
BUT
BUT
BUT

SOMETHING
IS
DRAGGING
ME OUT.

CHILD...? YOU...YOU SHOULD NOT BE HERE.
THERE'S AN EMERGENCY OUTSIDE. ALL STUDENTS SHOULD REMAIN IN THE DORMS.
S...
SOJOBO?
GO TO SLEEP, HADJI.
THUNK
WH...
WHAT'S--
YOU GOTTA BE THE DOC, RIGHT? THE &$%@*# DOTHEAD MUTOPHILE?

N-NO... WAIT--
WHAT'S HHH
APPENING?
KARASU?

K-KARASU, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE...
YOU KNOW ME. I'M A FRIEND.
I-IT'S SOJOBO...
HE'S CHANGED. S-SINCE YOU CAME.
HE'S DIFFERENT. HE SPEAKS STRANGELY. HE... HE FRIGHTENS ME.
B-BUT--
BUT HE'S STILL MY BROTHER.
HE'S STILL FAMILY.
OW OW OW
HE TOLD ME TO COME HERE. TO KEEP YOU HERE.
TO GIVE YOU THIS.
WH.
WHAT DOES IT SAY?
Hey Davey.
Something coming up. Real soon. Something big + terrible to wipe out all you godless muties for good. I seen it. And I'm just fixin' with that.
Thing is, my sister—my real freak—my sister's the only I got the means to stop it.
(Best part is, I only know all this cos of the powers I stole from her. You gotta laugh.)
Anyways, I aint about to let her stand in the way of you genesscum goin the way of the good. Sure you understand. So thanks for everything, you bin a real help. Just you sit tight, kunt.
—Luca.

LUCA.
AND OH, THE PENNY DROPS LIKE A BLOODY GREAT BOMB.
THE COINCIDENTAL MEETINGS.
THAT'S WHAT I DO. I PERCEIVE THE ROUTES THINGS MIGHT TAKE AND TWEAK 'EM TO GET THE ONES I WANT.
THE LIES IN THE MIND OF A MONSTER, CALCULATED TO SEND ME CHASING OFF TO THE RESCUE...
WE RECEIVED A PHONE CALL. ANONYMOUS.
THAT A MUTANT PSYCHIC WAS COMING TO DESTROY US.
THE HINTS. THE NUDGES.
HE'S TRYINNA TAKE THE CHILDREN! HE SAYS HE'LL HURT 'EM!
THE PATTERNS WITHIN THE CHAOS.
IS... IS SOMEONE IN HERE?
ALL OF IT PRECISE, DELIBERATE, CUNNING...

...ALL OF IT CALCULATED...
KARASU, I'M...I'M SO SORRY.
YOUR BROTHER'S DEAD.
...CALCULATED JUST RIGHT...
--TO LET A FIEND GET CLOSE TO AN ANGEL.
A BOM IN ATION.